

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

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TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: TALKING POINTS WITH TURKS ON DISPOSITION
OF WITHDRAWN SOVIET FORCES

REF: USNATO 3828

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1. UNLESS EMBASSY PERCEIVES OBJECTION, IT SHOULD MAKE

FOLLOWING POINTS ON MBFR TO GOT, INCLUDING GENERAL STAFF, AT APPROPRIATE LEVELS. (FYI: THIS APPROACH IS MOTIVATED BY THE POSITION THE TURKS HAVE TAKEN IN THE LATEST SPC DISCUSSION OF THE ALLIED NEGOTIATING POSITION ON MBFR. DETAILS ARE IN PARAS 5 AND 10 OF USNATO 4184 AS WELL AS IN REFTEL. END FYI.)

2. WE ARE FULLY AWARE OF TURKISH CONCERNS THAT SOVIET FORCES WITHDRAWN FROM CENTAL EUROPE MIGHT BE REDEPLOYED IN A WAY WHICH COULD INCREASE THREAT TO NATO FLANKS. THE US REMAINS COMMITTED TO THE INDIVISIBILITY OF ALLIANCE SECURITY AND ITS MAINTENANCE FOR ALL MEMBERS OF ALLIANCE THROUGHOUT MBFR AND IN ITS OUTCOME. THERE ARE NO DIFFERENCES OF VIEW ON THESE ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES.

3. HOWEVER, THE US BELIEVES THAT IT WOULD BE UNWISE FOR THE ALLIES TO PROPOSE THAT SOVIET WITHDRAWALS SHOULD ENTAIL DISBANDMENT OF THE WITHDRAWN FORCES. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF POSSIBLE DISPOSITIONS FOR SOVIET FORCES WITHDRAWN UNDER MBFR. FROM A STRATEGIC VIEWPOINT, THE USSR MAY CHOOSE TO STATION WITHDRAWN FORCES IN THE WESTERN MILITARY DISTRICT CLOSE TO THE POLISH AND CZECHOSLOVAKIAN FRONTIERS WHERE THEY CAN BE RETURNED MOST RAPIDLY IN THE EVENT OF CONFLICT TO THEIR PREVIOUS POSITIONS. ALTERNATIVELY, THEY MIGHT BE SENT FURTHER EAST, AND CONCEIVABLY MAY BE POSITIONED IN THE FAR EAST WHERE THEIR MAIN RELEVANCE WOULD BE TO CHINA. THEY MIGHT BE SENT ELSEWHERE IN THE SOVIET UNION, INCLUDING POSITIONS WHERE THEY WOULD POSE A THREAT TO NATO'S SOUTHERN FLANK. OR SOME OF THESE FORCES MAY INDEED BE DISBANDED. IT IS DIFFICULT TO ESTIMATE WHICH OF THESE POSSIBILITIES MIGHT BE ADOPTED, BUT WE WOULD DOUBT THAT REDEPLOYING WITHDRAWN FORCES TOWARD NATO'S SOUTHERN FLANK WOULD OCCUPY A HIGH PRIORITY IN PRESENT SOVIET THINKING. IF THE SITUATION CHANGES -- AND , IN FACT, WITHDRAWN SOVIET FORCES ARE REDEPLOYED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO THREATEN THE SOUTHERN FLANK -- WE AND ALL THE ALLIES WOULD HAVE TO ASSESS THESE DEVELOPMENTS AND CONSIDER HOW BEST TO REACT TO THEM. SUCH A COURSE OF EVENTS WOULD, HOWEVER, PROBABLY BE IN A BROADER CONTEXT THAN MBFR.

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4. IN THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS THEMSELVES, IT WILL BE THE COMMON ALLIED TASK TO MAKE CLEAR TO SOVIETS THAT SECURITY IS INDEED INDIVISIBLE, AS SOVIET DIPLOMACY HAS OFTEN CLAIMED, AND THAT ENHANCED STABILITY IN CENTRAL EUROPE IS CONSEQUENTLY INCOMPATIBLE WITH REDUCED STABILITY AND INCREASED TENSION ON THE FLANKS. WE WILL WISH TO MAKE SURE IN MBFR THAT THE SOVIETS REALIZE THEY WOULD BE

RISKING WHATEVER ADVANTAGES THEY MAY HOPE TO OBTAIN FROM MBFR IN TERMS OF IMPROVED POLITICAL CLIMATE IN EUROPE FOR NO GAIN WHATSOEVER IF THEY ACTED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO INCREASE TENSIONS ON THE FLANKS.

5. WE HAVE RECOMMENDED COMPENSATING FOR ASYMMETRIC CONDITIONS RELATING TO CENTRAL EUROPE BY SUGGESTING THAT WITHDRAWN US FORCES BE GIVEN FLEXIBILITY WITH REGARD TO TYPES OF FORCES TO BE WITHDRAWN AND DISPOSITION OF EQUIPMENT, AND THAT THE ALLIANCE SHOULD SEEK REDUCTION OF SOVIET FORCES BY MAJOR UNITS.

6. WE ARE CONCERNED THAT WESTERN PROPOSALS CONCERNING DISPOSITION OF WITHDRAWN SOVIET FORCES MORE FAR REACHING THAN THESE COULD ENDANGER THIS AND OTHER MAJOR NEGOTIATING GOALS. FORMAL WESTERN PROPOSALS THAT THE SOVIETS SHOULD AGREE TO DISBAND WITHDRAWN FORCES OR TO PLACE THEM IN STRATEGIC RESERVE COULD, AT THE VERY LEAST, PROVOKE SOVIET COUNTER-PROPOSALS THAT WITHDRAWN US FORCES BE TREATED IN THE SAME WAY. TO ACCEPT SUCH COUNTER-PROPOSALS WOULD AMOUNT AT LEAST TO CONSTRAINTS ON US CAPACITY TO REINFORCE THE EUROPEAN THEATER INCLUDING OF COURSE THE FLANKS, WHICH WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE TO THE US AND THE NATO ALLIES. THE SOVIETS MIGHT EVEN IN RESPONSE PROPOSE A CEILING ON US FORCE LEVELS IN THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES; THIS WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE TO US AND WE ASSUME ALL THE ALLIES. FURTHER, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD ENVISAGE CONDITIONS OF THIS KIND ON THE WAY THEY ARE TO TAKE MBFR REDUCTIONS WITHOUT COMPARABLE LIMITATIONS ON NON-US NATO FORCES. SUCH PROPOSALS COULD ENTAIL LIMITS ON FORCE IMPROVEMENTS AND COMPENSATORY ARRANGEMENTS WITHIN NATO WHICH WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE TO ALL ALLIES. MOREOVER, TO BE EFFECTIVE SUCH PROVISIONS

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ON DISPOSITION OF REDUCED FORCES WOULD REQUIRE A DEGREE OF DETAIL AND INTRUSIVENESS IN VERIFICATION WHICH WE CANNOT REASONABLY EXPECT THE SOVIETS TO ACCEPT AND COULD NOT ACCEPT OURSELVES IF APPLIED SYMMETRICALLY. FINALLY, THROUGH PROPOSALS OF THIS SORT WE WOULD RISK UNDERMINING THE FOCUS ON CENTRAL EUROPE WE HAVE FOUGHT SO HARD TO MAINTAIN THROUGHOUT OUR PREPARATIONS FOR MBFR TALKS AND IN THE VIENNA PREPARATORY CONSULTATIONS WITH A CONSEQUENT RISK THAT THE SOVIETS AND OTHER WARSAW PACT MEMBERS MIGHT PRESS FOR A WIDER AREA OR ADDITIONAL AREAS BRINGING WITHIN THE SCOPE OF REDUCTIONS THE ENTIRE RANGE OF US AND ALLIED FORCES ELSEWHERE IN EUROPE. RUSH

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